Hon'ble Minister of Law and Justice on the 27th October, 2006 about the danger of certain persons becoming Members of Parliament or of State Legislatures, suggesting amendments in the Representation of the People Act, 1951 to disqualify any persons accused of an offence punishable by imprisonment for five years or more, from contesting elections even when trial is pending, provided charges have been framed against them by a competent court. The Committee in its Eighteenth Report on the subject inter alia disagreed with the aforesaid proposal as it is a major departure from the law of the land that a person is not guilty until he is convicted by the highest court of the land. The Committee, however, recommended that proclaimed absconders under section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 be disqualified from contesting polls. The recommendation of the Committee has been examined in Legislative Department. Thereafter, the matter was further examined in consultation with the concerned Ministries and it has been decided not to pursue the matter at this juncture.

Awareness of Gram Nyayalayas

1129. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to make the Gram Nyayalayas functional from 2 October, 2009 to provide citizens access to justice at their door steps;

(b) if so, whether the citizens residing in rural areas and villages would be benefited from Gram Nyayalayas;

(c) whether the citizens in rural areas have been given proper awareness of Gram Nyayalayas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (DR. M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) to (d) The Central Government notified the Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008 to come into force *w.e.f.* 2.10.2009. This was also widely advertised in the print media including the vernacular press. A few States have begun the operation with Gram Nyayalayas functioning in some districts at the intermediate Panchayat level serving the rural areas and villages.

Grant of LTC to judges

1130. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:
DR. ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI:
SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that judges of Supreme Court and High Courts are availing of the Leave Travel Concession twice a year, instead of usual prevalent practice of once in two years;

(b) if so, the rationale therefor; and

(c) whether such a situation would continue?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (DR. M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) to (c) Leave Travel Concession for judges is regulated by the rules framed under the acts namely, "The Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1958" and "The High Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act 1954." As per provision under Rule 6-A of the Supreme Court Judges (Travelling Allowance) Rules, 1959, Judges of the Supreme Court are entitled to leave travel concession thrice a year and in terms of provision under Rule 7-A of the High Court Judges (Travelling Allowance) Rules, 1956 Judges of High Courts are entitled to leave travel concession twice a year. Both the High Court and the Supreme Court Judges were availing the Leave Travel Concession twice a year after 1986 but in 1990 the rules were changed after which Supreme Court Judges are entitled to three LTCs a year.

Bill to resurrect image of judiciary

1131. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is proposing to introduce a Bill to resurrect image of judiciary;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the legislation would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (DR. M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) to (c) The Government is considering to bring in a fresh legislation on the subject of judicial standards and accountability of Judges. The details of the proposed legislation are being worked out.

Setting up of additional High Court Benches

1132. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that there is a huge pendency of cases in High Courts;

(b) whether Government is thinking to establish High Court Benches in addition to the existing ones in view of the fact that the writs are on the increase;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (DR. M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) to (d) Setting up of a Bench of a High Court, is considered only if a complete proposal in terms of section 51(2) of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956 is received from the State